



Exeter Laboratory News

June 2020

COVID-19

SARS-CoV2, the virus which causes COVID-19 has been a priority test for the microbiology laboratory and there has been fantastic work to optimise testing locally, providing one of the best turnaround times in the country. This has meant routine work has been reduced, please see website for details. Blood sciences have been able to continue their full test repertoire during this time

PCR testing is becoming more accessible with tests for all admissions to secondary care, both acute and elective, symptomatic community patients receiving care in their own homes, all admissions to care homes, suspected cases in care homes followed by full care home testing. The group of people eligible for testing continue to expand as capacity increases

Serology (antibody) testing started 29th May with priority for healthcare workers. It is a huge task but highly important to understand prevalence and immunity

Exeter is participating in COG-UK, COVID-19 genomics consortium, which is performing whole genome sequencing on isolates to help build up a picture of the virus, its rate of mutation and spread around the world. Information can be viewed on the website www.cogconsortium.uk



GP Order Comms



The rollout of the new electronic pathology test requesting system (ICE) has proved highly beneficial to both GP's and the laboratories, with a notable improvement on laboratory turnaround times and fewer requesting mistakes. Feedback from GP's has been very positive. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we had to temporarily pause the rollout of ICE at the end of March, with 15 surgeries yet to go live. We are now in a position, whilst taking extra precautions, to resume the rollout of ICE and we are currently rescheduling go live dates for the remaining practices. We greatly appreciate the continued cooperation of all the GP practices in the rollout of the system

At the meeting, labs IMT were able to share figures related to which practices are using it and % up take. We also reviewed the most frequently ordered tests from primary care and discussed ways to optimise this for certain examples including urea, it was decided to add a pop up message to an order to question the need for it "Most GPs mean renal function when requesting 'Urea and electrolytes'. Please confirm that urea is specifically required before requesting this test"



MyCare

Due to COVID-19, implementation of the new electronic patient record system has been delayed. Following detailed planning work with Divisions and Departments within the Trust, 10th October has been confirmed as our new go live date alongside considering how best to meet the continuing needs of Covid19 and to restart essential services

Reflex Tests

The potential for the lab to do reflex tests was discussed, especially for anaemia where the patient would be brought back later for a further blood test for B12/folate or ferritin etc. This will be looked into further

GLInT (GP-Laboratory Interface Team)

At the beginning of March a new team met for the first time to bring together representatives from general practice with laboratory leads

GLInT will meet quarterly and feedback via this newsletter as well as to LMC and the Peninsula clinical effectiveness group. The lab side enjoyed a trip out to the countryside with a warm welcome at Wyndham House Surgery

GP leads are Anthony O'Brien and Jayne Govier. The group aims to promote effective communication between primary care and diagnostic services within RD&E NHS Foundation Trust in order to improve pathology services, create a forum for discussing issues relating to pathology services to drive improvement and delivering education and information to wider GP community

Exeter Blood Sciences Laboratory Refurbishment Update

The RD&E blood science laboratory is currently going through a major refurbishment as part of its commitment to deliver first class service. This has included a major upgrade in the chemistry analysers and the IT systems

The laboratory has introduced the ROCHE Cobas 8100 to link up the three analyser lines onto an automated track flow system. This state of the art equipment vastly decreases the manual handling of samples beyond their initial loading. Samples will now be centrifuged, transferred between analysers and stored by robotics. Using the new GP Order Comms system those samples are simply registered onto the system and loaded

These upgrades have enabled the laboratory to increase its capacity by 150% while also decreasing our turnaround times. This has allowed us to return more and more results to GP's by the end of the day and has decreased the need for out of hours telephoning to Devon Doctors



Our female staff gathered around the new analyser system for International Women's Day (pre Covid)

Finally...

If there are any items you would like GLInT to discuss, please email:

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You can follow the lab team on twitter [@Exeter_lab](https://twitter.com/Exeter_lab)

Remember there is useful information on the Exeter laboratory website www.exeterlaboratory.com

